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## Parliamentarians for Global Action

### For Immediate Release:

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### PARLIAMENTARIANS FOR GLOBAL ACTION CONGRATULATES GRENADA ON BECOMING THE 115<sup>TH</sup> STATE PARTY TO THE ROME STATUTE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT (ICC)

*NEW YORK/THE HAGUE, May 19, 2011* – PGA congratulates Grenada who today has deposited its Instrument of Accession to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) with the United Nations in New York, bringing the number of States that have joined the ICC system to 115. With today's accession by Grenada, only 8 countries in the Americas region have yet to become party to the Rome Statute - Bahamas, Cuba, Guatemala, Haiti, Jamaica, El Salvador, Nicaragua and the United States.

The very notion and concept of an International Criminal Court was raised in a UN General Assembly Resolution in 1989 by a State from the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), namely Trinidad and Tobago, at the initiative of PGA Member, Mr. A.N.R. Robinson, MP, in his capacity as Prime Minister. Grenada's accession, therefore, confirms and reinforces the Caribbean's important role in making the International Criminal Court a lasting and effective reality.

Since 1998, Parliamentarians for Global Action, a network of Legislators from all regions of the world, has been pleased to work in the Caribbean region, holding its *5th Consultative Assembly of Parliamentarians on the ICC and Rule of Law* in 2008 in Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic) and, earlier that year, a *Regional conference on Ratification and Implementation of the Rome Statute* in Paramaribo (Suriname).

Given the close relations that exist between Grenada and the United States and the past skepticism of the latter towards the ICC, PGA particularly welcomes this step taken by Grenada, which might have been indirectly influenced by a growing confidence on the part of the US in the Rome Statute system. Similarly, PGA hopes that this development will also contribute to clear the path for the Bahamas, El Salvador and Jamaica to become parties to the Rome Statute without undue further delay. PGA furthermore calls upon the remaining countries in the Americas to join the ICC-system and, in so doing, the world-wide battle against impunity.

The Chair of PGA's International Council, **Dr. Ruth Wijdenbosch, MP**, Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Suriname, applauded the decision of Grenada and called for its Parliament *"to swiftly discuss relevant legislation in order to fully implement the provisions and obligations of the Rome Statute into domestic law, including the incorporation of international crimes, as well as the procedures to effectively cooperate with the ICC"*.

**Dip. Margarita Stolbizer, MP**, PGA Board member from Argentina, affirmed that *"PGA continues to cooperate with other actors of the civil society, particularly the CICC Secretariat - which played an important role in Grenada -, the*

*Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute and international organizations such as the EU, the OAS, the CARICOM and the Commonwealth, in order to ensure that the entire region commits itself to the Rule of Law and Human Rights to put an end to impunity.”*

PGA further commends the European Union (EU) for its successful interaction in 2010 with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Grenada in support of the country's accession, starting with a pivotal letter of High Representative Catherine Ashton on the universality of the Rome Statute. This EU initiative has proven to be an effective tool in increasing global awareness of the ICC as a cornerstone of international criminal justice.

*About PGA:*

Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA) is a network of members of parliament from all regions of the world who, in their individual capacity, have pledged to mobilize political will in favour of the establishment, effective and complementary operation of an independent ICC. Members of PGA have contributed to 69 of the 115 ratifications of, or accession to the Rome Statute to date. PGA is a member of the Steering Committee of the Coalition for the ICC. The *PGA Campaign for the Universality and Effectiveness of the Rome Statute system* receives support from the European Commission (EC) and the Governments of Belgium, The Netherlands, and Switzerland.